

# Housing Management Bulletin



No. 4

MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING OFFICIALS

May 21, 1941

JOINT REFERENCE

MAY 29 1941



CHAIRMAN  
HENRY  
CREIGHTON  
SAYS . . .

As NAHO's Management Division starts another year with plenty of problems and uncertainties ahead, I believe we have the right to read with some satisfaction the editorial below from the current issue of Public Management, a monthly magazine published by the International City Managers' Association. It is indeed high praise because ICMA is one of the older and more highly developed associations of public officials in this country. Furthermore, our staff assure me that they not only did not write the editorial but knew nothing about it until it appeared in print.

However . . .

We should not, however, risk too many broken arms from patting ourselves on the back. On all of the points singled out in the editorial, housing management still has a long way to go. In addition, we must, among other things, help to develop better training; clarify our ideas on personnel requirements and organizations; learn much more on the practical, day-to-day problems of maintenance and operation; simplify and perfect methods of accounting, rent collecting, and reporting; develop skill in helping to make our projects into communities and parts of larger communities; sift our experience for lessons applicable to project planning and local authority policy; and, last but not least, meet the demands of the defense housing program for able, progressive housing management.

On these problems the Management Division's officers and staff are prepared to do their utmost but a very large part of our success or failure rests with you, the members of the Division. Your experience, ideas, and opinions are the chief raw material from which wise management policy and effective procedures will have to be made. We need your active work on committees, your frank criticisms of the Division's program and methods, and particularly your contributions, large and small, to the HOUSING MANAGEMENT BULLETIN and to the NOTES ON MANAGEMENT PRACTICE. Only by time and some little effort on your part, can the Division be made into a first-rate clearing house on all questions and problems in housing management. With your help, the Division's future program can continue the high standards that have been set for it by Ray Voigt, Carleton Sharpe, and many others and that are so graciously recognized in Public Management's editorial.

## Housers Off to Good Start

NO one who attended the recent meeting of the Management Division of the National Association of Housing Officials at Cincinnati could doubt that this young profession is off to a good start. Public housing is still a new development, in this country at least, but these newcomers to the profession of public management have already made it clear that they will be leaders in the elevation of professional standards and the development of management principles and techniques. Out of the many favorable impressions brought back from this meeting, three may be singled out for special mention.

First, we were impressed by the caliber of personnel that this new profession has attracted to its ranks. We still know very little about the specific attributes of a good

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administrator, but we do know that men in management positions need to have a breadth of outlook and understanding that will enable them to appreciate the interrelationship between one problem and another and to correlate and integrate specific activities into a balanced program. That the majority of these housing managers have this capacity for the "over-all" point of view was evident in their discussions of the topics on the Cincinnati program.

Second, we were impressed by the way in which the housing managers addressed themselves to some of the fundamental problems of management. Because of the newness of their field and their organization, one might have expected that they would squander their meeting time in discussions of superficial matters or in a self-satisfying but non-productive exchange of "now-let-me-tell-you-about-what-I-have-to-contend-with" experiences. Instead, these housing managers tackled headlong such management problems as how to appraise administrative effectiveness and how to measure the social effects of public housing. These are problems for "grown-up" managers, and they met them with "grown-up" intelligence and forthrightness.

Finally, we were especially encouraged by the attitude of the group toward other local problems and other local governments. True to form, most of the early housing legislation established housing authorities as *ad hoc* agencies entirely independent of existing local governments. As a natural consequence, there has been a great deal of friction between some housing authorities and their governmental neighbors — friction that has been detrimental to the progress of public housing and to the best interests of the citizens whom all of these local governments are serving. The greatest hope for immediate reduction of this costly friction lies in the development of voluntary cooperation between housing managers and high ranking administrative authorities in other local governments. That most of the housing managers appreciate this need for cooperative action, and are prepared to do their share in coordinating local services, was clearly demonstrated at the Cincinnati meeting.

### THE MASTHEAD

Pictured is one of the recreation terraces of Yonkers' first completed project -- 552-unit, USHA-aided Mulford Gardens.

## HIGH LIGHTS OF THE DIVISION'S FIRST YEAR

By Gunnar Mykland

*The following statements are quoted or condensed from the report of Mr. Mykland, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Division, presented at the Annual Meeting in Cincinnati on April 16. A more complete report is to be published in the 1941 Housing Yearbook, which will be sent to all Division members early in June.*

*Shortly after the Cincinnati Meeting, Mr. Mykland left NAHO to become Assistant Chief of the Management Section, Division of Defense Housing, Federal Works Agency. His successor has not yet been appointed.*

### Membership

In the period between the First and Second Annual Meetings of the Division, there was an increase in membership from 40-odd to 220.

### Committees

Fourteen committees, each headed by a Council member, were appointed by the Executive Council at one of its initial meetings. Six of these committees were able to report some progress to the Annual Meeting.

### Regional Meetings

A series of six regional meetings were held during the fall and winter months in all of the USHA regions except the Far West (Region VII). At all of these meetings management figured prominently in the discussions and a very considerable portion of the time of each conference was devoted to such problems as graded rents, administrative organization for management, and maintenance problems. These are the first regional meetings of NAHO in which such emphasis has been placed on management and in which there has been much active participation by actual operating managers in the field. Attendance at these meetings totaled approximately 600.

### Publications

The HOUSING MANAGEMENT BULLETIN was improved and continued and the first two issues of a new series of publications called NOTES ON MANAGEMENT PRACTICE were published. Other Division publications during the year were: Four Million Tenants, A Training Program for Housing Management, A Selected Bibliography on Housing Management. A number of publications from other sources and from NAHO itself were also distributed to Division members.

### Training

A much improved in-service apprenticeship system of training for housing management was devised by the Division in cooperation with USHA and several local authorities and is outlined in the publication A Training Program for Housing Management. The Division's part in FWA's training program for defense housing managers is fully described in the March issue of the BULLETIN.

### The Future

It seems to me that there are two things of primary importance that the Division should emphasize during the coming year. The first of these is training for management.

... After we have achieved this first hurdle . . we then are faced with the problem of determining the effectiveness of that personnel . . . My observations around the country in the past few months . . have led me to inquire of myself more and more just what is a good housing manager. . The answer to this problem up to the present time has not been determined on the basis of any honest method of evaluation but primarily on the basis of "hunches," first impressions, and other means which may be equally misleading. If housing management is to develop as a profession and if housing management is to make the contribution to housing which it is daily being called on for, it is absolutely imperative that we develop some workable measures of the effectiveness of management in order that we may not only gauge and compare our operations with one another; but in order that we may gauge and compare our own operations from year to year in an effort to determine if we are getting better or worse or if we are just standing still.

### NEW DIVISION MEMBERS

Abernethy, W. N. - Housing Manager, Washington Square, Northcott Court, and Marum Terrace, Huntington (W. Va.)	MacPhail, Winburn L. - Defense Housing Manager, Federal Works Agency, Mt. Clemens (Michigan)
Baasch, Hans H. - Farm Security Administration, Indianapolis	MacPherson, Helen S. - Manager, Quinnipiac Terrace, Housing Authority of the City of New Haven
Bleyer, Willard L. - Assistant Manager, Red Hook Houses, New York City	McIntyre, James H. - Manager, Terrace Village II, Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh
Bucknell, Ethel T. - Resident Housing Manager, Sand Point Homes, Seattle	Moron, Alonzo G. - Manager, University Homes and John Hope Homes, Atlanta
Burnett, E. William - Housing Manager, Housing Authority of the City of Wilmington (North Carolina)	Pappalardo, Pascal T. - Property Manager, Kenfield, Buffalo
Gillespie, William M. - Manager, De Sota Bass Courts, Dayton	Peace, William Henry, Jr. - Housing Manager, Housing Authority of the City of Raleigh
Hughes, W. Gerard - Executive Director, Municipal Housing Authority of the City of Utica	Peterson, John E. - Manager, Defense Housing Project, Federal Works Agency, Boise (Idaho)
Hyde, Warren C. - Supervisor of Administration, Chicago Housing Authority	Ruth, Edgar K. - Housing Manager, Winton Terrace Project, Cincinnati
Jackson, Hubert M. - Supervisor of Tenant Selection Office, Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta	Ryan, Thomas F. - General Manager, Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority
Johnson, Alex W. - Defense Housing Manager, Federal Works Agency, Tallahassee (Florida)	Shuford, Miss Helen A. - Tenant Selection Supervisor, the Alley Dwelling Authority for the District of Columbia
Jordan, Frank B., Jr. - Resident Housing Manager, New York City Housing Authority	Sutcliffe, William J., Jr. - Housing Manager, Commodore Perry Homes, Buffalo
Kelly, Joseph A. - Management Trainee, Boston Housing Authority	Weaver, Chester L. - Administrative Assistant, Boston Housing Authority
Killeen, Peter C. - Housing Manager, Defense Housing Project, Federal Works Agency, Hempstead (New York)	Wise, Harold F. - Administrative Assistant, Housing Authority of the City and County of Sacramento

### A TENANT LETTER

*The following is quoted from a letter addressed to the editor of El Carmelito, tenant paper of Los Angeles County's Carmelitos.*

"A group of us were enjoying ourselves over a cup of coffee in a neighbor's kitchen today and were talking, as usual, about Carmelitos. A lot of things were said and feelings were expressed about what life in this new community means to us . . . We can all feel that there is something utterly new and different in our life here. It's as though something that had been asleep for a long time were struggling to wake into full consciousness. It seems to me that that 'something' is a deep-seated craving for the nearness of friendly people; people whose joys and sorrows are blended with our own; people who join with us in the pride of things created for our common good. I think we've all been hungry for this for a long time and didn't know it.

"Our old environment stifled this human urge to neighborliness. There one side of the street was divided from the other by the roar and rumble of traffic. One house was divided from another by stores or shops. People came and went with scarcely a nod at each other. If there were places where we could go and meet other people we never heard about them. There was no feeling of 'belonging' in the community. In fact there was no feeling of there being a community. How different it is here in Carmelitos! Already there are hundreds of neighbors who smile and actually stop to chat. . . It's nothing in the world but the same kind of old-fashioned neighborliness that made our fore-fathers the fine American citizens that they were. May it grow strong and may its roots grow deep in our community!"

On order for Division members is Coordination of Local Management Programs by the Division of Defense Housing Coordination, a first policy statement, subject to changes. Copies will reach you soon, although the U. S. Printing Office is swamped now.

Help!

the BULLETIN needs

pictures

ideas

signed articles

'hints' on housing management

## PROJECT UNIT PRE-VIEWS

► The Housing Authority of the City and County of San Francisco has secured permission from its contractors to show units to prospective tenants some two weeks before the acceptance date. This has made it possible to have tenants occupy the homes at a much earlier date than otherwise would be possible. First 44 units of the Authority's 772-unit Sunnydale were accepted from the contractor on the morning of March 1. By evening of the next day, 42 of the 44 homes had been occupied by the new tenants. The Authority points out that under this arrangement there is a considerable increase in initial project revenue.

## WALL WASHING AND PAINTING

► The management at Outhwaite Homes, Cleveland, to prevent improper washing of walls which might result in spoiling present paint jobs, furnishes tenants measured packages of approved washing compound, instructions for its application, and the use of project ladders—all free of charge. They warn tenants: "Don't take chances with commercial compounds which may spoil the paint job. Remember, we cannot repaint your apartment if you ruin it by improper washing."

## TENANT VIGILANCE

► At the James Weldon Johnson Homes in Philadelphia the tenants have a club, the sole purpose of which is to preserve the attractive appearance of the project. Its goal is accomplished by means of campaigns for such causes as having clothes lines taken down when not in use - having all garbage and trash receptacles kept closed - having walks, yards, and all public spaces kept clear of papers, rubbish, etc.

## SUMMER SCHOOL

► Abraham Goldfeld, a member of the Division's Executive

## HINTS TO THE HOUSING MANAGER

Council and Manager of Lavanburg Homes, New York City, is to conduct a course in the management of large-scale, low-rent housing projects from June 30 to August 8, at the University of California.

## EDITORIAL

► From the Greendale Review:

### THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE

Where does your child play? Does he cluster with all the neighbor children under your feet until you are ready to push them all out and scream? Or does he have a fatal attraction for the middle of the street?

Today I picked up three youngsters, all two years old, and took them home. Each one was at least six blocks from home. I can drive down any street in Greendale and find youngsters of pre-school age in the street. Something is wrong with such a set-up.

Don't excuse yourself weakly by saying, "It is so good for them to be out of doors and besides, traffic isn't so very heavy on our street". Any street that cars travel on is not a safe playground for children. Are we going to wait until we have a fatal accident before we realize that fact?

Fathers and mothers have often remarked to me that it is impossible to keep track of youngsters and keep them out of the street. I realize that it is on the mothers that most of the burden falls in keeping track of the children and that mothers must also do housework and a million other tasks that never end so it is important that we find a solution to the problem.

Whose fault is it that he wants to play in the street? Let's name over his toys. Roller skates, coaster wagon, tricycle, scooter. Where is the child going to use them? On the family drive? Too small. On the sidewalk? Too rough and probably on the other side of the street. That leaves the street which is large enough and also smooth. The children can't be blamed for using the street as their playground under such conditions.

Whose fault is it anyway? Don't say the government for not putting walks on both sides and making them smoother. That is passing the buck and does not solve the problem.

Who buys the tricycles and skates without thinking where they will be used?

Well, all the other kids have them. True but must we be sheep and follow a leader? It is only in foreign countries that folks must do that. We in America can think and do as we please in raising our children.

It is just possible that some other kind of toy would do just as well as a tricycle and keep the children off the street. Sand boxes are interesting for little tykes. Swings, a Trapeze, a horizontal bar, a climbing pole are all interesting to children.

A pup tent is nice for both boys and girls. The boys like to take it down and put it up pretending they are camping. Little girls like to play house in them.

I mention these things because they are comparatively inexpensive. Some of you parents can think of many other inexpensive things that can be made by ingenious daddies at very small cost.

It is not the big things that we do that are important but the little things. George Washington is better known for having chopped down the cherry tree than for anything else. Let us as American citizens use that freedom to think and do that God has given us and solve our "small" problems in Greendale.

—POLICE CHIEF TAYLOR

## TENANT DISCIPLINE

► The Laurel Home News (Cincinnati) carries a column called "The Owl" which asks a series of "Who - Who - Who" questions, as: Who in a certain building allows their children to play in the basement? Who in a certain building sweeps the halls when it is their turn but leaves the dirt in a pile in the corner? - Who allows their children when quarantined with contagious diseases to leave their homes? -

Who . . . etc., etc. This is an interesting device for bringing home to tenants the rules and regulations of the project.

## EXCESS UTILITY CHARGES

► In order to satisfy tenant complaints regarding excess utility charges, the Housing Authority of the City and County of San Francisco has purchased an electric appliance meter. The loan of this meter to tenants, the Authority reports, has enabled them to reveal great waste of electrical energy due to defective refrigerators and the use of three-way indirect floor lamps. As a consequence, tenants have made changes in their home arrangements which have resulted in sizable financial savings as well as preserving amicable landlord-tenant relationships.

## WASHING MACHINE SERVICE

► At Bedford Dwellings (Pittsburgh) the management is conducting a tenant survey to gather information on various phases of project life that might be improved. One of these points is the kind of washing machines in most common use on the project, the idea being that a repair service might be maintained if most of the machines are of a popular make. Under such a circumstance, parts could be easily obtained and a service man contracted for, giving the tenants the benefit of reasonable rates and quick service.

## CORRECTION

► The item "Community Activities" in the April BULLETIN may have implied that Mr. Goldfeld's analysis of community activities was based on a comprehensive study of all the projects in the country. He wants it understood that his figures were compiled from data he had at hand and that his conclusions are in the form of "spot checking" rather than complete statistics.